White Paper on Article 356

†4038. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any political party has suggested Government to have a general discussion in the Parliament and issue white paper regarding Article 356;

(b) If so, the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government are considering seriously to bring white paper in the Parliament regarding Article 356; and

(d) if so, whether a general consensus has been formed in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (d) Article 356 has been the subject matter of discussion in the meetings of the Standing Committee of the Inter-State Council. In the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee, the subject was remitted to a Sub-Committee consisting of the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh and Finance Minister of West Bengal under the Convenorship of the Union Defence Minister. The matter was also discussed in the fifth meeting of the Inter-State Council held on 22nd January, 1999 in which it was decided that the Sub-Committee under the Convenorship of the Union Defence Minister should continue deliberations to evolve a consensus.

The Inter-State Council is yet to take a final view in the matter.

Indigenous Telemedicine Field Unit

4039. DR.Y.LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Defence organisation in Hyderabad successfully tested indigenous tele-medicine field unit;

(b) if so, the details of medical facilities to be made available through telemedicines; and

(c) the benefits to general public through this facility?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No indigenously developed telemedicine field unit has been tested. However, Defence Research and Development Organisation has undertaken certain competence building tasks to acquire such a capability.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Relief for Ramagiri Goldmine Workers

4040 DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minsiter of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Ramagiri Goldmine Workers Union, Andhra Pradesh have requested to extend certain relief measures like exemption of payment of royalty to avoid closure of mines;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(c) the measures proposed/taken to rehabilitate the Goldmines in Ananthapur district of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTERY OF MINES AND MINERALS DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA: (a) and (b) The Ramagiri Goldmine Workers Union, Andhra Pradesh had submitted a representation in June, 1998 to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh requesting for waiver by the State Government of royalty on gold ore mines in Andhra Pradesh by Bharat Gold Mine Limited (BGML) and subsidy on the power consumed by BGML. The Central governement had advised the State Government that the issues were to be addressed by the Goverment of Andhra Pradesh.

(c) As efforts to rehabilitate BGML including through the joint venture route were not successful the Goverment felt that revival of the Company was not feasible. The Government submitted to the Board for Industrial and Financial Restructuring (BIFR) that it would have no objection to winding up of the Company under the provisions of Sick Industrial Company (Special Provisions) Act, 1985 (SICA), and that the Government was ready to offer to all the employees on rolls of the Company as on 31st March, 1999 the benefit of the separation scheme on the lines of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) package approved for the Public Sector Enterprises of the Department of Heavy Industry. The Government has already offered, in December 1999 the benefit of Voluntary Retirement scheme (VRS) to all those employees of BGML who opt for the same by 31-3-2000.